

REMARKS

Please reconsider this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1, 2, and 4-6 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, and 4 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1 or 4.

Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been amended to clarify that an input voltage from a focusing operation portion not lower than a predetermined voltage is led to ground. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments, as support for these amendments may be found, for example, in paragraphs [0049]-[0051] and in Figure 3 of the publication of the specification. Further, claim 2 has been amended to replace “one of the” with “said,” as in the previous version of the claim. No new matter has been added by way of this amendment.

Objection(s)

Claim 2 is objected to because the third to last line of the claim should recite “said semiconductor device” instead of “one of the semiconductor device.” By way of this reply, claim 2 has been amended to recite “said semiconductor device.” Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, and 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 09-237428 (hereinafter “Hiroshi”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,189,638 issued to Kimura (hereinafter “Kimura”). Independent claims 1, 2, and 4 have been amended by way of this reply. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to an optical pickup actuator circuit for recording or reproducing information. An optical pickup 1 in accordance with one or more embodiments of the invention comprises a lens holder 2, which serves as a movable portion and a base which serves as a stationary portion (*see, e.g.*, publication of the Specification, paragraphs [0032]-[0033], Figures 1 and 2). Lens holder 2 comprises: a shaft 3 formed substantially in the center of lens holder 2, tracking coils 4 and 5 disposed on the upper side of outer surfaces 2a and 2b of lens holder 2, and a focusing coil 7 wound on the outer circumference of a cylindrical portion 6 formed on a lower side of lens holder 2 (*see, e.g.*, publication of the Specification, paragraph [0034], Figure 1).

As seen with respect to Figure 3 of the Specification, one end 7a of focusing coil 7 is connected to a positive pole terminal 15a of focusing operation portion 15, while the other end 7b of focusing coil 7 is connected to a negative pole terminal 15b of focusing operation portion 15 (*see, e.g.*, publication of the Specification, paragraph [0049], Figure 3). Further, two diodes D1 and D2 are parallel-connected between one end 7a and ground (*see, e.g.*, publication of the Specification, paragraph [0050], Figures 3 and 4).

Accordingly, when a voltage not lower than a predetermined maximum absolute value is applied by focusing operation portion 15, diodes D1 and D2 lead the overvoltage to ground. In other words, as shown, for example, in Figure 5, diodes D1 and D2 clamp a current at

the time where a signal voltage from terminal 15a exceeds a predetermined voltage of 0.7 V in absolute value (*see, e.g.*, publication of the Specification, paragraph [0051], Figure 5).

Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 requires an input voltage from a focusing operation portion not lower than a predetermined voltage is led to the ground by one of the two diodes. Amended independent claim 2 requires an input voltage from a focusing operation portion not lower than a predetermined voltage is led to a ground by said semiconductor device. Amended independent claim 4 requires two diodes each connected in parallel to an input line of one of said focusing and tracking coils for leading an input voltage of a predetermined voltage or more from a focusing operation portion to a ground side.

Hiroshi, as acknowledged by the Examiner, does not show or suggest two diodes connected in parallel to an input line of said focusing coil so that an input voltage not lower than a predetermined voltage is led to the ground by one of the two diodes. However, the Examiner relies on Kimura to teach that which Hiroshi lacks.

Applicant respectfully asserts that Kimura, like Hiroshi, does not show or suggest at least leading an input voltage from a focusing operation portion not lower than a predetermined voltage to ground. Further, Kimura fails to show or suggest at least that which Hiroshi lacks. In contrast to the claimed invention, Kimura is directed to countermeasures taken against static electricity in a portable semiconductor memory device (*see* Kimura, col. 1, lines 10-13). Specifically, Kimura teaches a body panel (26) of a semiconductor memory device (31) that is connected to a connector (27) through a connection means (58, 78) to block the flow of current to terminal equipment (29) (*see* Kimura, col. 5, lines 44-60; col. 6, lines 34-47). Although Kimura discloses diodes connected in parallel, Kimura teaches diodes connected in parallel to block static electricity from a portable memory device or a terminal (*e.g.*, a

computer). Thus, Kimura does not teach diodes connected in parallel to an input line of a focusing coil of an optical pickup actuator circuit to route an input voltage to ground.

Further, while the Examiner asserts that Hiroshi and Kimura are analogous art because they are in the same problem solving area (*see* Office Action dated October 31, 2005, at page 4), Applicant respectfully asserts that Hiroshi is completely silent with respect to preventing damage to an objective lens caused by excessive voltage. In clear contrast to the claimed invention, Hiroshi is directed to efficiently moving an objective lens to a center position through the mutual movements of a tracking coil and a tracking magnet (*see* Hiroshi, abstract).

One skilled in the art would not look to Kimura to teach limitations of the claimed invention, because as discussed above, Kimura is directed to solving a problem wholly unrelated to blocking an input voltage from a focusing operation portion larger than a maximum voltage to a focusing coil of an optical pickup actuator circuit. Therefore, (i) neither Hiroshi nor Kimura are in the same field of endeavor as the claimed invention and (ii) neither Hiroshi nor Kimura are reasonably pertinent to the particular problem addressed by the claimed invention. Accordingly, Hiroshi and Kimura are non-analogous art and have been improperly applied to the pending claims.

Further, Applicant notes that there is no motivation to combine the cited references. The Examiner cannot combine prior art references to render a claimed invention obvious by merely showing that all the limitations of the claimed invention can be found in the prior art references. There must be a suggestion or motivation to combine the references within the prior art references themselves. In other words, regardless of whether prior art references can be combined, there must be an indication within the prior art references expressing desirability to combine the references. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680 (Fed. Cir. 1990) (emphasis added). Further, the present application *cannot be used as a guide* in reconstructing elements of prior art

references to render the claimed invention obvious. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488 (Fed. Cir. 1991) (emphasis added).

As discussed above, Hiroshi is completely silent with respect to blocking an input voltage larger than a maximum voltage from a focusing operation portion to a focusing coil of an optical pickup actuator circuit. Therefore, one skilled in the art would not be motivated by Hiroshi to incorporate the teachings of Kimura without the present application as a guide. Hiroshi provides no motivation to block an input voltage as discussed above. Further, Kimura is directed to a wholly different problem solving area than Hiroshi, that is, countermeasures taken against static electricity in a portable semiconductor memory device. Clearly, one skilled in the art would not be motivated by Hiroshi or Kimura to incorporate the teachings of the other without the present application as a guide. Thus, there is no motivation within the references themselves to combine the cited references in a rejection against the present claims.

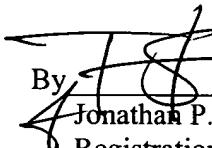
In view of the above, Hiroshi and Kimura, whether taken separately or in combination, (i) fail to show or suggest the invention as recited in independent claims 1, 2, and 4, and (ii) are not properly combinable. Thus, amended independent claims 1, 2, and 4 are patentable over Hiroshi and Kimura. Claims 5 and 6, directly or indirectly dependent from claims 1 or 4, are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 04995/049001).

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Respectfully submitted,

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